

Message Text

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21

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /116 W

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R 090851Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8550

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, KE

SUBJ: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DISSOLVED; GENERAL ELECTIONS SET FOR
OCTOBER 14.

1. PRESIDENT KENYATTA, IN WIDELY ANTICIPATED MOVE, HAS DISSOLVED KENYA'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND ANNOUNCED OCTOBER 14 AS DATE FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS. ALL 158 ELECTED SEATS IN 171 SEAT ASSEMBLY WILL BE AT STAKE. UNDER KENYAN CONSTITUTION, NEXT ASSEMBLY TO COMMENCE IN THREE MONTHS.

2. ON AUGUST BACK BENCHERS, CITING UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND LED BY OUTSPOKEN GOK CRITIC JOHN SERONEY (WHO HAD BILL PENDING STRENGTHENING LEGISLATURE'S ROLE VIZ-A--VIS PRESIDENT), REJECTED MOTION BY VICE PRESIDENT MOI TO ADJOURN INDEFINITELY. SINCE JULY 5 INTRODUCTION OF SWAHILI AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE IN ASSEMBLY (NAIROBI 5648), PACE OF ASSEMBLY'S DELIBERATIONS HAS BEEN MARKEDLY SLOWED BY NEAR-CONTINUOUS AND OFTEN ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE OVER USE OF SWAHILI IN CONSIDERING LEGISLATION WHICH HAD BEEN DRAFTED AND INTRODUCED IN ENGLISH. ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO RULED THAT BUSINESS OF GOK, INCLUDING COLLECTION OF TAXES, CAN BE CARRIED FORWARD FOR SIX MONTHS WITHOUT LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL.

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3. ALL CANDIDATES WISHING TO CONTEST ELECTIONS MUST APPLY TO SOLE POLITICAL PARTY, KENYA AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION (KANU), FOR APPROVAL. THIS APPROVAL EXPECTED TO BE PERFUNCTORY EXCEPT FOR EX-KPU DETAINEES, WHOSE CANDIDACY LIKELY TO BE DISALLOWED ON GROUNDS EITHER A) THREE YEARS HAVE NOT PASSED SINCE RELEASE FROM DETENTION OR B) CANDIDATES HAVE NOT IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES FULLY WITH GOK AND KANU POLICIES.

4. NOMINATION DATE, WHICH WILL BE ANNOUNCED NEXT WEEK, MUST PRECEDE OCTOBER 14 ELECTION BY AT LEAST 28 DAYS (CONSTITUTIONAL MINIMUM FOR CAMPAIGN). IN PRACTICE CAMPAIGN ALREADY UNDERWAY IN MANY CONSTITUENCIES ON LIMITED SCALE BETWEEN INCUMBENTS AND EX-CIVIL SERVANTS WHO HAD TO RESIGN POSTS JUNE 30 TO CONTEST ELECTION.

5. MEANWHILE PREPARATIONS GOING SMOOTHLY FOR AUG. 17 LOCAL ELECTIONS. WHILE LOCAL OFFICE CONTEST DOES NOT RECEIVE SAME PRESS ATTENTION ACCORDED GENERAL ELECTION, ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING REPORTEDLY TAKING PLACE AT WARD LEVEL ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS.
MARSHALL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, NATIONAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NAIROB06731
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740218-0333
From: NAIROBI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740860/aaaabzqw.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 AUG 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <21 FEB 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DISSOLVED; GENERAL ELECTIONS SET FOR OCTOBER 14.
TAGS: PINT, PINS, KE, (KENYATTA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005